

MAY 24, 2005

SCHAKOWSKY CALLS ON CONGRESS TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND PREVENT ACCIDENTAL CAR-RELATED DEATHS

WASHINGTON, DC - Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) joined Rep. Peter King, leaders from the consumer protection organizations *Kids and Cars* and *Consumers Union*, and the parents of children who were killed in non-traffic related automobile accidents today at a Capitol Hill press conference in support of H.R. 2230, the Cameron Gulbransen Kids and Cars Safety Act of 2005. The bill introduced by Representative King and Schakowsky on May 10th would set safety standards to make cars safer for children.

Below are Congresswoman Schakowsky's remarks, as delivered:

"Three children in America are needlessly killed each week in non-traffic related accidents. Many of them are killed without ever leaving their driveways - hit by cars backing up or suffocated by unsafe power windows. In 2004, we lost more than 100 children to back-over accidents alone because they went unseen. Some SUV's have blind spots as deep as 50 feet, so large that 20 children can be hidden from them. Last year an increased number of children also died because of unsafe power windows.

The greatest tragedy is that these deaths are preventable. And we can take action today to prevent them by passing our bill, the Kids and Cars Safety Act. We already have the technology to protect these children. It's a low cost and readily available, and we should require that it's installed in every car. Simply requiring safer power window switches, better rear visibility, and a reminder system letting drivers know if passengers remain in the vehicle could have many children's lives each year.

The cost of setting basic standards is minimal. The cost of losing another child's life is not.

The time for action is now. I call on my colleagues to support our bill to set standards that would save hundreds of children's lives for a little money. The safety of our children is worth it. We shouldn't wait for another death - we must act now to protect our children"